

Remarks/Arguments

Reconsideration of this application is requested. This response is being filed within two months of the final Office Action mailed on January 11, 2007. Accordingly, should this response for some reason not place the application into condition for allowance, applicant requests and is entitled to an Advisory Action at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Claim Status

Claims 1-4 and 8-24 are pending. Since no claims are amended, added or canceled by this response, no listing of claims is required under 37 CFR 1.121.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 103(a)

Claims 1-4 and 8-24 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Zakurdaev (US 2002/0073182) in view of Gong (US 2001/0044819) and Suzuki (US 2002/0032616). In response, applicant traverses the rejections.

The present application claims priority in JP 2001-007049, which was filed in Japan on January 15, 2001, and JP 2001-007876, which was filed in Japan on January 16, 2001. In order to perfect its claim to priority in these filing dates, applicant has prepared and encloses verified English translations of the certified copies of the priority documents.

Suzuki was filed in the United States on July 9, 2001, which follows applicant's earliest effective priority date. Although Suzuki claims priority in an earlier-filed Japanese application, under 35 USC 102(e), Suzuki is effective as prior art only as of its United States filing date of July 9, 2001. Since applicant has perfected its claim to priority in the earlier filing dates of January 15 and 16, 2001, Suzuki is not available as prior art against this application.

Since all grounds for rejection of claims 1-4 and 8-24 under 35 USC 103(a) are in reliance on Suzuki, applicant traverses the rejections and submits that they should be withdrawn. There being no further grounds for rejection, this application is now in condition for allowance.

Appl. No. 10/045,698
Reply dated March 9, 2007
Reply to Office Action of January 11, 2007

Atty. Ref. 81800.0177
Customer No. 26021

Conclusion

This application is in condition for allowance. The Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to resolve any issues that remain after entry and consideration of this response. Any fees due with this response may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: March 9, 2007

By: 

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